

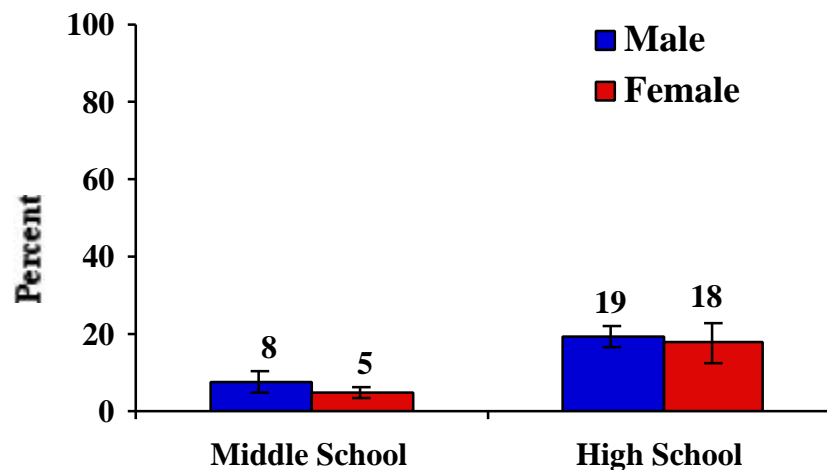
## **Healthy Kentuckians 2010: Schools and Tobacco Use**

Healthy Kentuckians 2010 recommends increasing the proportion of schools with tobacco-free environments and increasing the proportion of schools that provide research-based tobacco use prevention curricula. Research shows that the school health programs that use skills training approaches are the most effective in preventing tobacco use.<sup>23</sup> Programs and policies that prevent the onset of smoking during middle school years are a crucial part of a comprehensive tobacco prevention program. In addition, programs targeting high school students reinforce the earlier messages and can provide an opportunity for youth to develop leadership skills within their communities.

## Schools and Tobacco Use

### Smoking on School Property

- ✓ Overall, 6% of middle school students and 19% of high school students report smoking cigarettes on school property during the past 30 days.
- ✓ High school smokers are more likely to smoke cigarettes on school property than middle school smokers.



**Figure 43. Students who smoked cigarettes on school property during the past 30 days**

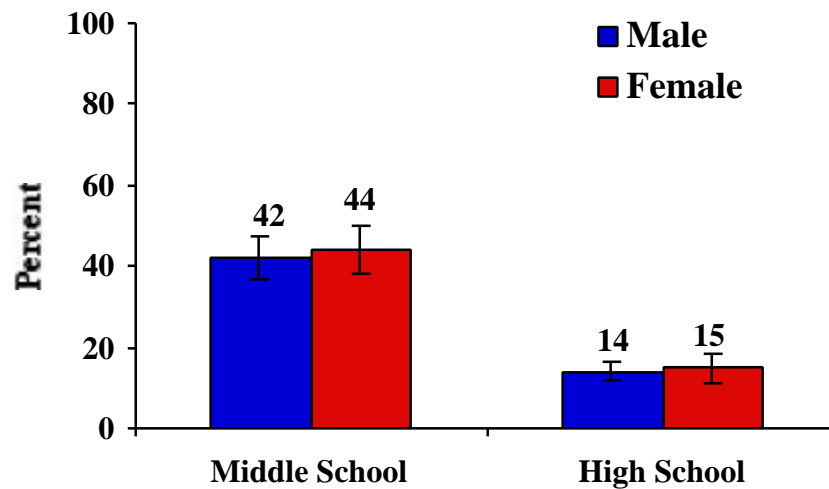
### Background and Significance

Nationally, 2% of middle school students and 9% of high school students smoked cigarettes on school property in the past 30 days.<sup>1</sup> A higher proportion of Kentucky youth smoke on school property than U.S. youth. Schools that have strong, consistently enforced policies on tobacco use can help students decide not to use tobacco.<sup>23</sup> A tobacco-free environment has many benefits including decreased fires and discipline problems related to smoking and easier maintenance of school facilities and grounds. Schools have an important opportunity to promote tobacco-free norms by developing and enforcing tobacco-free policies including all athletic facilities, vehicles, and school grounds.<sup>24</sup>

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### Practicing Ways to Say “No” to Tobacco

- ✓ Overall, 43% of middle school students and 15% of high school students practice ways to say “NO” to tobacco at school.
- ✓ Middle school students are more likely to practice ways to say “NO” to tobacco use at school than high school students.



**Figure 44. Students who practiced ways to say "NO" to tobacco by gender**

### Background and Significance

The findings reported here are consistent with the fact that about one in four middle and high schools in Kentucky report using at least one research-based alcohol, tobacco, and drug curriculum, and middle schools are more likely to teach tobacco prevention than high schools.<sup>6</sup> School health programs that use skills training approaches have been shown to be effective in reducing the onset of tobacco use.<sup>23</sup> The CDC recommends that schools provide tobacco use prevention education in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and that it be especially intensive in middle school and reinforced in high school.